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Imperial Valley Community Foundation to Manage Fund to Protect the Burrowing Owl Created by Solar Developer 8minutenergy

– Fund Will Finance a Variety of Initiatives to Conserve the Habitat of the Burrowing Owl –

EL CENTRO, CA (**January 14, 2013)** – The Imperial Valley Community Foundation (IVCF) today announced that it will manage the Burrowing Owl Stewardship and Education Fund recently established by 8minutenergy Renewables - a leading solar developer - in conjunction with the Sierra Club. Through a competitive grant and review process, the fund will extend financial support for initiatives designed to protect the Burrowing Owl in the Imperial Valley, Calif. The IVCF is a non-profit organization specializing in managing charitable funds and personal/corporate giving programs that benefit the Imperial Valley.

Over half of all Burrowing Owls in North America live in the Imperial Valley. The new fund represents a long-term investment in safeguarding and protecting the habitat of the Burrowing Owl in Imperial Valley. 8minutenergy and the IVCF worked closely with the Sierra Club to develop the structure of the fund. The fund will be overseen by an advisory committee composed of professional conservationists, scientists and an IVCF/Ag-community representative.

Some of the activities the fund is expected to support through grants include:

- Identifying and acquiring Burrowing Owl habitat for permanent conservation protection and enhancing such habitat

- Working with landowners and land managers to restore or enhance Burrowing Owl habitat on farmland (e.g., installing artificial burrows or other habitat enhancements)

- Creating and/or disseminating “best practices” to educate farmers, landowners and local agencies about preserving and enhancing biological resources for Burrowing Owls without negatively impacting farming operations

8minutenergy, the Sierra Club and the IVCF will encourage other renewable energy companies, as well as local residents, to make financial contributions to the fund. Those receiving grants from the fund will be encouraged to work with other organizations trying to protect the Burrowing Owl, such as the Imperial Irrigation District (IID), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and programs related to the Burrowing Owl within the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. Future grant opportunities and information regarding the fund’s activities will be posted on the Foundation’s website: www.ivcommunityfoundation.org.

"I'm glad to see 8minutenergy’s solar projects in the Imperial Valley moving forward because they contribute to the local economy and create jobs," said Tim Kelley, Chairman of the Imperial Valley Community Foundation and President and CEO of the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation. "We are also pleased that 8minutenergy is using the Imperial Valley Community Foundation as a resource for businesses and individuals to make charitable investments in the

community and conservation. The Foundation is happy to assist the region through supporting efforts that sustain our environment and ecology while also benefiting existing and future industry."

"8minutenergy has developed a blueprint for renewable energy companies to work side-by-side with government and community partners to maximize the positive impacts of their investments in the Imperial Valley, while supporting the conservation and preservation of local culture, history, resources and wildlife," said Bobby Brock, President/CEO of the Imperial Valley Community Foundation. "We look forward to working with 8minutenergy and other, future partners, as well as with community leaders, to promote sustainable philanthropy and conservation initiatives that will benefit the Imperial Valley for years to come."

"The Sierra Club is thrilled to see solar developers using this fund to invest in the owl's future," said Bill Corcoran, Western Regional Campaign Director for the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign. "8minutenergy's planned contributions to the fund extend far beyond any mitigation requirements expected of it by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). We applaud 8minutenergy for responsibly siting its solar projects and taking the needs of the burrowing owl into account early on in the process. 8minutenergy's work shows we can successfully generate renewable energy and conserve wildlife."

"We are grateful to the IVCF for its willingness to administer this fund to support conservation in Imperial County," said Tom Buttgenbach, president of 8minutenergy Renewables. "8minutenergy is dedicated to developing clean, renewable solar energy projects that bring jobs and economic benefits, but also to soliciting the expertise of groups like the Sierra Club to achieve mutual goals like protecting wildlife and the environment."

"The ability for renewable energy development and agriculture to prosper in the Imperial Valley is dependent upon a willingness to coexist and work with community and conservation organizations," said Paul Cameron, farmer, cattle feeder and IVCF Board member. "Contributions to this fund not only allow the Burrowing Owl to be protected, but they will also protect local farming operations and educate private land owners on avoiding potential environmental risks and fines."

About 8minutenergy Renewables, LLC
8minutenergy is a California-based company that is passionate about helping California develop its renewable energy industry and is developing more than 2,000 MW of solar PV projects all located on private, disturbed and low-value farm land within California. 8minutenergy's development team is the largest focused on solar PV in California and the United States. In concert with our partners, 8minutenergy delivers complete solar power plant solutions, including all aspects of development, financing, engineering, construction, operation and maintenance. 8minutenergy's proprietary transmission, land and economic analysis process and tools helps select optimal power plant sites for accelerated permitting with counties and utilities. 8minutenergy has offices in Folsom, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego and El Centro, California. For more information, please call (916) 608-9060, send email to info@8minutenergy.com or visit www.8minutenergy.com.

About The Imperial Valley Community Foundation
The Imperial Valley Community Foundation (IVCF) connects donors with the causes they care about most to improve the quality of life in Imperial Valley. IVCF exists to increase local charitable giving and grow a portfolio of diverse charitable funds established by local residents, businesses and community groups that will serve the community for generations to come in perpetuity. Serving the entire Imperial Valley and working to strengthen the resources and opportunities for our communities and larger region, the Foundation is governed by local community leaders and works hand in hand with the local professional advisor community to better serve their clients to fulfill their charitable goals

and preserve the contributions and legacies of Imperial Valley's benefactors and patrons. The Foundation is an IRS recognized 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization and California public benefit corporation.

For more information, please call (760) 336-0055, send email to bobby@ivcommunityfoundation.org or visit http://www.ivcommunityfoundation.org.

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